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William Boozer

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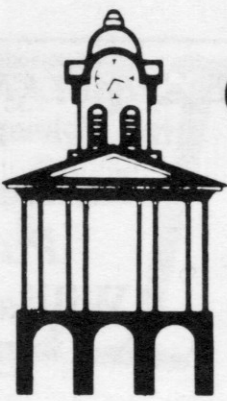
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THE FAULKNER NEWSLETTER

& Yoknapatawpha Review



Vol. IV, No. 3

A Checklist

The First Three Novels in New Paper Editions

Recent and forthcoming new paperback editions of Faulkner's first three novels are among leading items of interest in FN's 16th Checklist on Faulkner:

Anderson, Sherwood. *Selected Letters*. Charles E. Modlin, ed. References to Faulkner in letters to Horace Liveright, John Lineaweaver, Laura Copenhagen, and an unnamed recipient. Anderson wrote Liveright, his publisher, from New Orleans on June 1, 1925: "That young Bill Faulkner I told you about down here as the one writer here of promise has finished a novel. He calls it 'May Day.' Do you want to see it. I think he is going to be a real writer." (Faulkner's first novel, *Mayday*, was published as *Soldiers' Pay* by Boni and Liveright on February 25, 1926.) Anderson, in a Nov. 11, 1937 letter from New York to Laura Copenhagen, his mother-in-law, told of having been called to the Algonquin Hotel where "Bill Faulkner [was] on a big drunk" Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 260 pp. + xviii. \$24.95.

Contemporary Literary Criticism: Excerpts from Criticism of the Works of Today's Novelists, Poets, Playwrights, Short Story Writers, Film-makers, Scriptwriters, and other Creative Writers. Volume 28 in the series. Edited by Jean C. Stine. Includes

(Continued Page 4)

Rowan Oak Given William Spratling Drawings, Photos

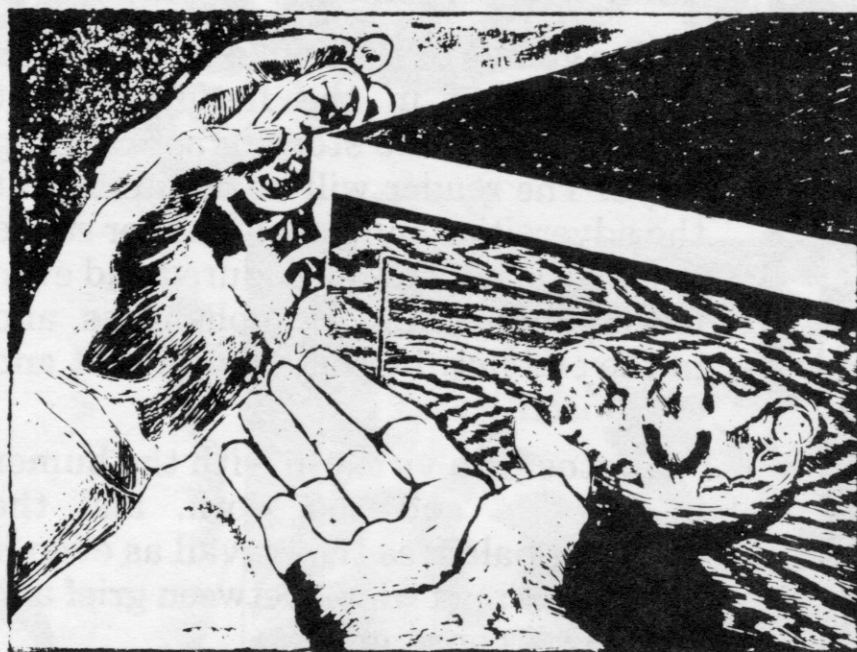
A collection of memorabilia from the days when young William Faulkner shared William Spratling's French Quarter apartment in New Orleans has been donated to Rowan Oak, Faulkner's Oxford home.

Rowan Oak Curator Howard L. Bahr said the materials, including Spratling sketches and a photograph of him made in the apartment, have been given to Rowan Oak by a Virgil E. Sellers with the understanding that only his name be used.

Included in the collection are a charcoal drawing of Sherwood Anderson, a charcoal portrait of "Miss Charlotte Price," and three sketches of a "mildly pornographic" nature.

Virgil E. Sellers reportedly fell heir to the mementos when he moved into the apartment after Spratling's departure for Mexico in 1929. The collection may be viewed at Rowan Oak upon request.

PEN/FAULKNER AWARD FOR FICTION



I went to the dresser and took up the watch, with the face still down. I tapped the crystal on the corner of the dresser and caught the fragments of glass in my hand and put them into the ashtray and twisted the hands off and put them in the tray. The watch ticked on.

—The Sound and the Fury

NOMINEES:

RON HANSEN
THE ASSASSINATION OF JESSE JAMES BY THE COWARD ROBERT FORD
WILLIAM KENNEDY
IRONWEED
JAMAICA KINCAID
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE RIVER
BERNARD MALAMUD
THE STORIES OF BERNARD MALAMUD
CYNTHIA OZICK
THE CANNIBAL GALAXY
JOHN EDGAR WIDEMAN
SENT FOR YOU YESTERDAY

JUDGES:

David Bradley
Robert Coover
Mary Gordon

MAY 12, 1984

July-September 1984

PEN/Faulkner

Bolt Etchings Commemorate Annual Awards

By WILLIAM BOOZER

Of the inspiration of Faulkner there is no end, and four more examples are splendid works of art produced by Virginia artist Thomas Bolt to commemorate the annual PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction.

It is Faulkner's art that inspires the etchings for the 1984 fourth annual award (top left) won by John Edgar Wideman for *Sent for You Yesterday*, the story of a half-century in the lives of two families in a black Pittsburgh neighborhood, and for the first award (below), won in 1981 by Walter Abish for *How German Is It*. Both depict scenes from *The Sound and the Fury*.

Bolt, of Charlottesville, draws from *The Hamlet* and "The Bear," respectively, for the 1982 and 1983 commemorative posters shown on page three. The 1982 award was won by David Bradley for *The Chaneyville Incident*, with the award in 1983 going to Toby Olson for *Seaview*.

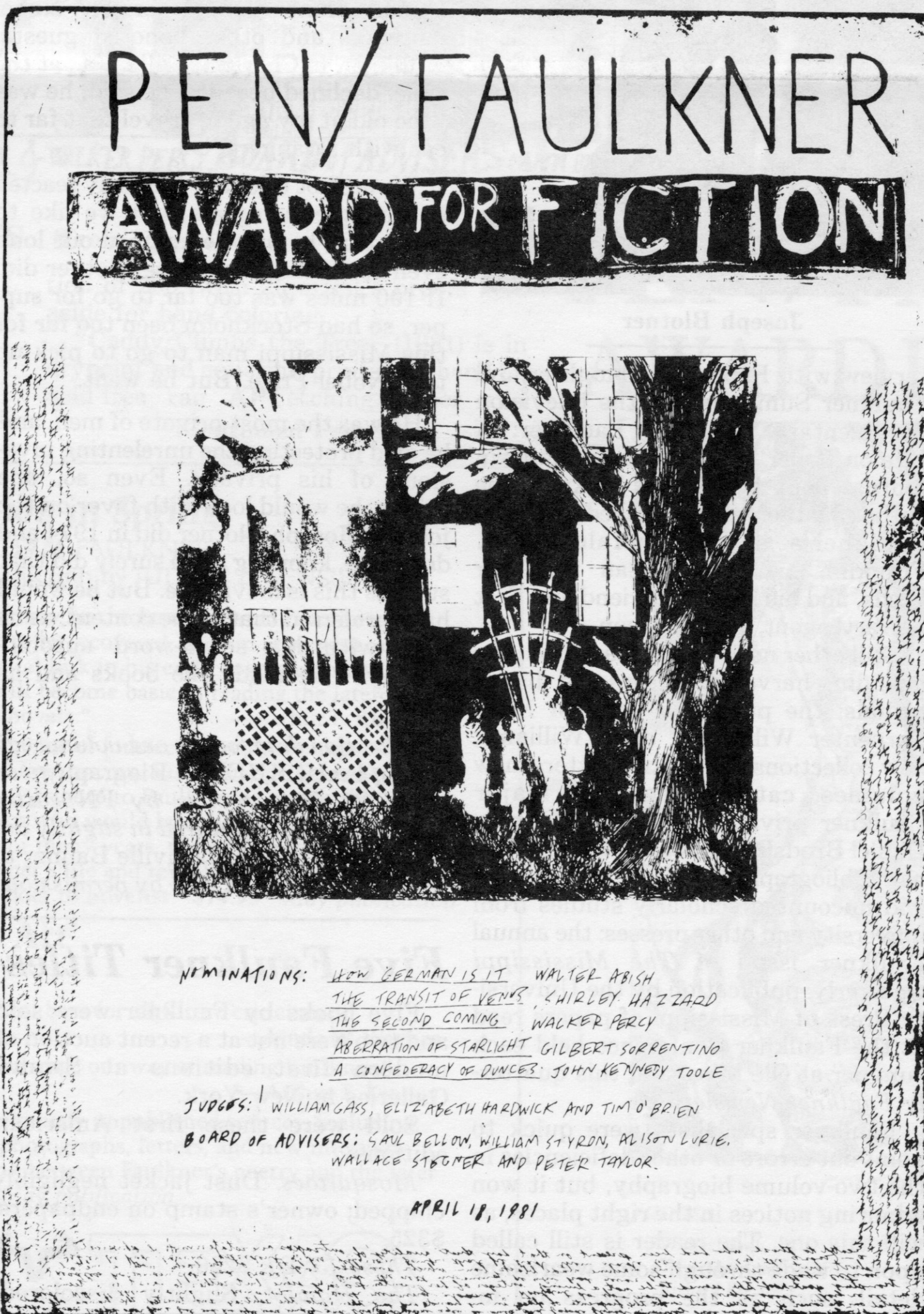
The PEN/Faulkner Award, now carrying cash prizes of \$5,000 for the winner and \$1,000 for each of the other nominees, recognizes the best in American novels and short stories published in the previous calendar year. All four winners to date have been novels.

Founded at the University of Virginia and co-sponsored by the PEN American Center in New York and writer-members of the Center's PEN South branch, the PEN/Faulkner is the nation's only literary award sponsored and judged solely by writers. Administered since 1982 by the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, the award has two antecedents: the prize Faulkner created with part of his Nobel Prize money, and the other the demise of the National Book Awards, which gave way to the industry-dominated American Book Awards.

The 1984 nominees were selected from more than 250 novels and short story collections considered by the three judges named on the poster.

Sent for You Yesterday is Wideman's sixth novel, and his third set in Homewood, the Pittsburgh community in which he grew up. The judges cited the new work, from Bard/Avon Books, as "an extraordinary blend of innovation and tradition, an old-fashioned 'family history' in which the family is as large as the entire community, and the history is told in the rhythm of the blues, each voice speaking like a solo instrument." Wideman, 42, teaches

(Continued Page 3)



Blotner Taps New Sources on Faulkner

FAULKNER: A Biography. By Joseph Blotner. One-Volume Edition. Random House. \$35.

Few of our writers, if any, have been on the receiving end of such a mixture of accolades and arrows as William Faulkner.

Few have generated such a gold mine of copy, journalistic and scholastic, by the way they lived and what they said and wrote. From no one else have we had such a burst of creativity as we had in seven short years beginning in 1929 when Faulkner published five novels we now know as masterpieces.

And few have been so fortunate in their biographers as Faulkner is in Joseph Blotner.

The British novelist and playwright Arnold Bennett said of Faulkner early in the career: "He writes generally like an angel."

Robert Penn Warren, in reviewing Malcolm Cowley's Viking *Portable Faulkner* in *The New Republic* in August 1946, found that "The study of Faulkner is the most challenging single task in contemporary American literature for criticism to undertake."

Eleven years before, another Vanderbilt Fugitive-Agrarian had shown how unprophecy some of our finest critics can be. In reviewing *Pylon* for the *Nashville Banner* on March 24, 1935, John Crowe Ransom concluded that "William Faulkner is spent." As that was written by Ransom, Faulkner was finishing *Absalom, Absalom!*

Comes now Joseph Blotner to weigh again the life and art of one whom many regard as America's greatest writer, those who — with Blotner — "cannot hope to look upon his like again."

Thus did Blotner preface his epic two-volume biography of Faulkner in 1974, as he does this one-volume condensation a decade later. The 1974 work, 11 years in researching and writing, ran to 2,115 pages, weighed eight pounds, and cost \$25. What we have now is an 800-page updated capsule rewrite of the earlier work in which Blotner corrects errors, amplifies here and there, and draws on the scholarship, criticism and other writings, including posthumously published Faulkner works, that have inundated us since that first Blotner labor of love 10 years ago.

This new version weighs in at less than three pounds, and what has happened to the prices of books over the years has happened here. This one costs better than four cents a page, and it is a good buy for anyone interested in the life and work of the man who, in those seven years beginning in 1929, gave us *The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Sanctuary*, *Light in August* and *Absalom, Absalom!*, then went on to publish *The Unvanquished*, *Go Down, Moses*, *The Hamlet*, and the rest.

Blotner gave us a masterpiece of literary biography in that 1974 work, and his study is even more definitive and polished now for the good reason that the biographer knows his subject better today than he did 10 years ago.

Contributing to Blotner's new sources are the Faulkner volumes that have appeared in the intervening years: *The Marionettes*, *Mayday*, *Sanctuary: The Original Text*, *Helen: A Courtship*, and *Mississippi Poems*.

Blotner now also draws on a rare in-

FAULKNER

A BIOGRAPHY • ONE-VOLUME EDITION



BY JOSEPH BLOTNER
REVISED • UPDATED • CONDENSED



Joseph Blotner

terview with Faulkner's daughter, Jill Faulkner Summers, for the television documentary, "William Faulkner: A Life on Paper"; a previously unknown journal kept by Murry Falkner, the author's father, and published works by Faulkner's stepson, Malcolm A. Franklin, his niece, Dean Faulkner Wells, and his longtime friend and first literary agent, Ben Wasson.

Still other new sources have been the unending harvest of theses and dissertations; the published work of Meta Carpenter Wilde and Joan Williams; new collections of Faulkner letters; new volumes cataloguing the major Faulkner private collections of Louis Daniel Brodsky and Carl Petersen; two new bibliographies of Faulkner criticism and uncounted scholarly studies from university and other presses; the annual Faulkner issue of *The Mississippi Quarterly*; publication by the University Press of Mississippi of papers read at the Faulkner Conference held each summer at Ole Miss, and this quarterly *Faulkner Newsletter*.

Faulkner specialists were quick to point out errors or other deficiencies in the two-volume biography, but it won admiring notices in the right places, as will this one. The reader is still called upon to wade through some wearisome detail, such as the progress on individual stories and novels. ("By early

September [1941], Section 2 of the story ['The Bear'] was in New York.") And authorial and proofing lapses persist such as the one that has Faulkner arriving at Lexington for the Kentucky Derby (did he land there and then drive to Louisville, but what difference does it really make?). Another still has Ben Wasson at Faulkner's funeral in July 1962; Wasson, as his published memoirs of Faulkner now make clear, did not attend the funeral.

But trivia, to the extent that it is just trivia, will nag only Faulknerians, not the general reader. To read on is to be rewarded with choice narrative that shows how Faulkner drew on life for his art, how he abided personal and financial crises, and how he came to be on that literary pedestal where he is now safely and permanently in place.

The genius of the man is well enough demonstrated in the fiction, and it permeates the life story in astonishing ways. The reader will be astounded at the adversities and how Faulkner coped and prevailed, how he endured and even fostered all manner of foolishness, and in the end how he could laugh at it and at himself.

Blotner is a virtuoso with the humor in the life and the work, and the laughter balances the travail as even it did for the man who, "between grief and nothing," chose grief.

We read again of President Kennedy having invited Faulkner to a White House dinner for American Nobel laureates and other honored guests. Faulkner, in Charlottesville, Va., at the time, declined because, he said, he was "too old at my age to travel that far to eat with strangers."

We are not told how Kennedy reacted to Faulkner's regrets, but we like to think that he maybe laughed out loud even as Faulkner and Joe Blotner did. If 100 miles was too far to go for supper, so had Stockholm been too far for this Mississippi man to go to pick up that Nobel Prize. But he went.

He was the most private of men, and he died protesting the unrelenting invasions of his privacy. Even so, one thinks, he would look with favor on the job that Joseph Blotner did in 1974 and does here, knowing as he surely did that such as this is inevitable. But he would have preferred that we be content, as he was, with his seven-word autobiography: "He made the books and he died."

(Publication date for the one-volume edition of *FAULKNER: A Biography* was April 30. This review by FN editor William Boozer appeared in slightly different form in the *Nashville Banner* of May 12, and is used here by permission.)

Five Faulkner Titles Are Sold At Auction

Five books by Faulkner were sold and two were not at a recent auction of modern first editions at Swann Galleries in New York.

Sold were these first American editions:

Mosquitoes. Dust jacket negligibly chipped; owner's stamp on endpapers. \$325.

These 13. Dj. \$250.

The Hamlet. Slightly discolored, spine creased; endpaper signed by

THE FAULKNER NEWSLETTER
& Yoknapatawpha Review

Lawrence Wells
Publisher
William Boozer
Editor

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Vol. IV, No. 3

July-Sept 1984

Faulkner & History Is Salamanca Topic

Faulkner scholars from several countries were at the University of Salamanca in Spain in April for a Third International Faulkner Colloquium. Theme for the four-day program was "Faulkner and History."

Participants and their topics were Michel Gresset, "Faulkner's War with Wars"; Francois Pitavy, "Was/Is: Irony and Imagination in Faulkner"; Jacques Pothier, "Family Stories and History in Faulkner's Fiction"; Andre Bleikasten, "Faulkner and the Noise of History"; James Hinkle, "Faulkner's Apocrypha: History Re-written in Yoknapatawpha Baroque"; Ilse Duso Lind, "The Personalization of History"; John Matthews, "Faulkner and the Reproduction of History"; Patrick Samway, "June 2, 1910: An Historic Day"; Javier Coy, "'Your mind and you are our Sargasso sea': Faulkner's *Go Down, Moses*"; Joris Duytschaever, "Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*, Simon's *La Route des Flandres*, and Claus's *Der Verwondering*"; Kiyoyuki Ono, "Faulkner and History: *As I Lay Dying* and *The Scarlet Letter*"; Catalina Montes, "'Listen, stranger, this was myself; this was I': *Requiem for a Nun*"; Robert Silhol, "On *Sanctuary* and History"; Stephen Ross, "Monumental Language in Faulkner," and Enrique Garcia, "Images: An Audiovisual Presentation of *The Sound and the Fury*."

Organizers of the colloquium were Professors Gresset of the University of Paris VII; Bleikasten, University of Strasbourg, and Montes and Coy of the University of Salamanca.

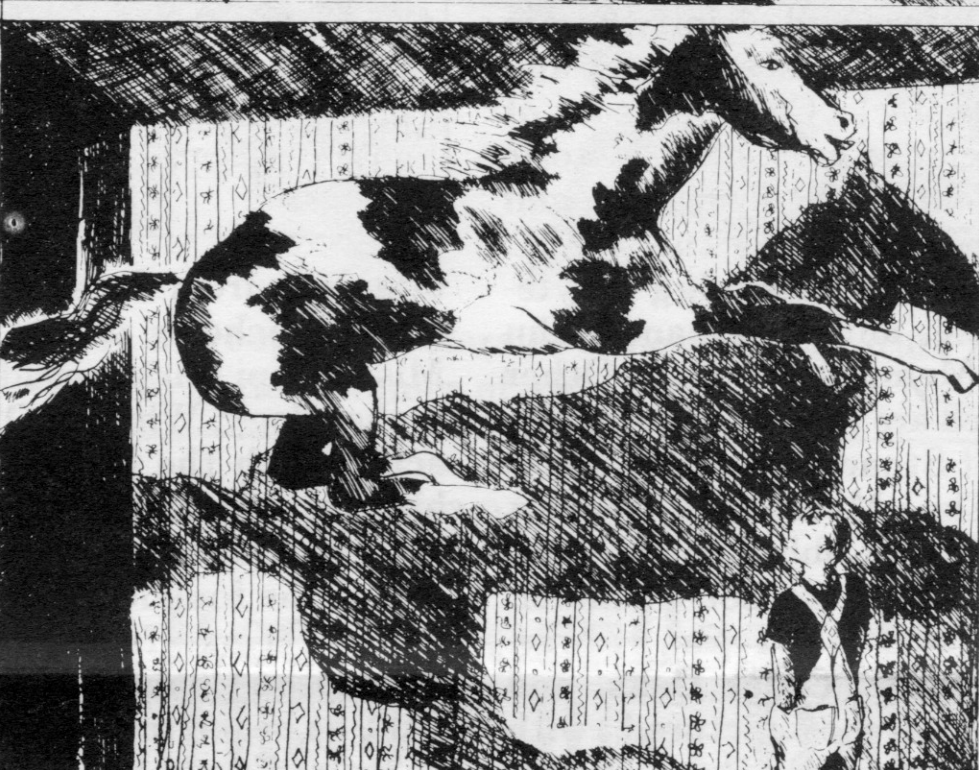
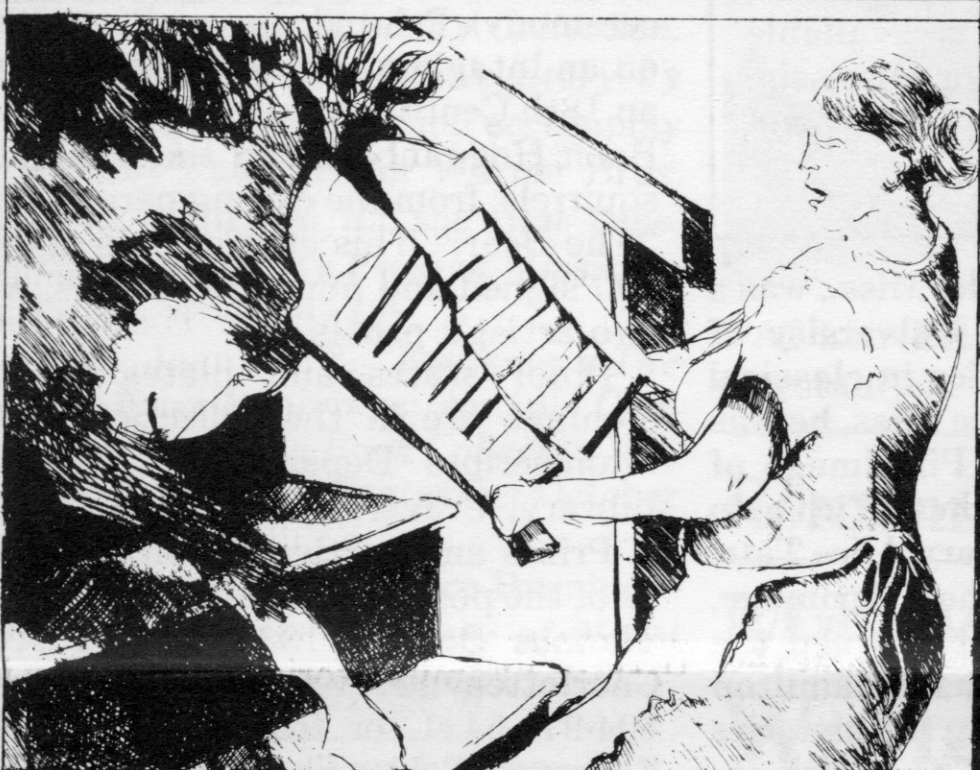
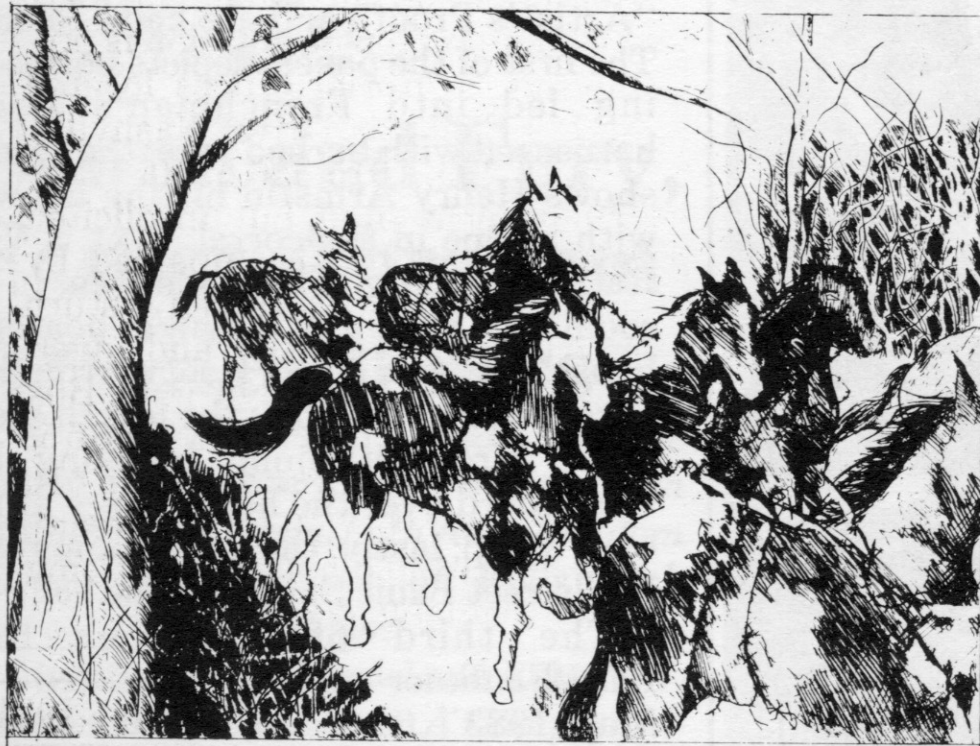
previous owner; dj stained and chipped. \$30.

Intruder in the Dust. Endpaper signed by previous owner; dj by E. McKnight Kauffer, tape reinforced. \$80. *A Fable*. Dj. \$25.

Withdrawn were the 1975 facsimile printings of *Marionettes* by the University of Virginia Press (100 numbered copies) and Yoknapatawpha Press (500 numbered copies, with Ben Wasson's "A Memory of Marionettes").

PEN / FAULKNER

AWARD for FICTION



NOMINEES:

SIXTY STORIES
DONALD BARTHELME

TAKE ME BACK
RICHARD BAUSCH

THE CHANEYSVILLE INCIDENT
DAVID BRADLEY

ELLIS ISLAND & OTHER STORIES
MARK HELPRIN

HOUSEKEEPING
MARILYNNE ROBINSON

A FLAG FOR SUNRISE
ROBERT STONE

APRIL 10, 1982

JUDGES: WESLEY BROWN, JOHN HAWKES & WALKER PERCY **BOARD of ADVISERS:** ANN BEATTIE, VANCE BOURJAILY, SHIRLEY HAZZARD, BERNARD MALAMUD, GRACE PALEY

PEN/Faulkner Etchings (From Page 1)

English at the University of Wyoming. Bolt's work commemorating the 1984 award, announced in a May 12 ceremony at Folger Shakespeare Library, is a relief etching with handset type, printed by hand letterpress on Rives paper in an edi-

tion of 200, with 25 artist's proofs held aside for hand coloring. "Caddy Climbs the Tree" (1981) is in drypoint and aquatint, printed by hand on acid-free rag AP etching paper and (Continued Page 4)

PEN/FAULKNER

AWARD FOR FICTION

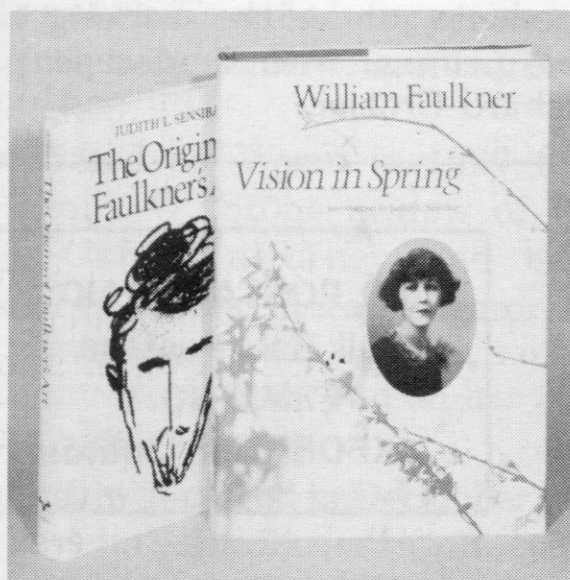


JUDGES:

Walter Abish
Toni Morrison
Richard Price

NOMINEES:

Maureen Howard *Grace Abounding*
Bobbie Ann Mason *Shiloh and Other Stories*
Toby Olson *Seaview*
George Steiner *The Portage to San Cristobal*
Anne Tyler *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*
William S. Wilson *Birthplace*



Vision in Spring

WILLIAM FAULKNER
Introduction by JUDITH L. SENSIBAR

"This may be the last important Faulkner work to be recovered; it is, in any event, an essential link in his early development that . . . will become basic in reading the later great novels."
—Arthur F. Kinney
A sequence of fourteen previously unpublished love poems, *Vision in Spring* stands in moving tribute to Faulkner's love for the woman who would later become his wife. Lost for many years, the sequence illuminates Faulkner's life and reveals his own transition from poet to novelist. \$14.95 May publication

The Origins of Faulkner's Art

JUDITH L. SENSIBAR

"Sensibar has . . . come up with a theoretical base for all future criticism of Faulkner."
—Linda W. Wagner
". . . one of those seminal books that will change our way of reading Faulkner."
—Arthur F. Kinney

A groundbreaking study that draws on previously unpublished sources, including *Vision in Spring*, as well as other poetry, photographs, letters, and new interview material. Sensibar establishes the vital link between Faulkner's poetry and the later great works of fiction to come. \$22.50 May publication

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BOX 7819 AUSTIN, TEXAS 78712 University of Texas Press

Checklist. . .

(From Page 1)

critical commentary of Faulkner, James M. Cain, John Gardner, Richard Kostelanetz, Mina Loy, Norman Mailer, Pablo Neruda, Manuel Puig, and Paul Theroux. Cumulative indexes to authors and critics in volumes 1-28. Appendix. Detroit: Gale Research Co. About 650 pp. \$80.

Faulkner, William. *Mosquitoes*. First appearance of Faulkner's second novel in a Liveright paperback edition. To be published in February 1985 by W. W. Norton & Co. \$6.95.

_____. *Sartoris*. Foreword by Robert Cantwell. Afterword by Lawrence Thompson. Revised and updated bibliography. New York: New American Library, first Meridian Classic printing. Published November 1983. \$3.50.

_____. *Soldiers' Pay*. New Liveright paperback printing, coming in February 1985 from W. W. Norton & Co. \$6.95.

Kazin, Alfred. "An American Tragedy and *The Sound and the Fury*," in *An American Procession*. This new Kazin study examines the major American writers from 1830 to 1930. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 397 pp. + xvii and Index. Published May 14.

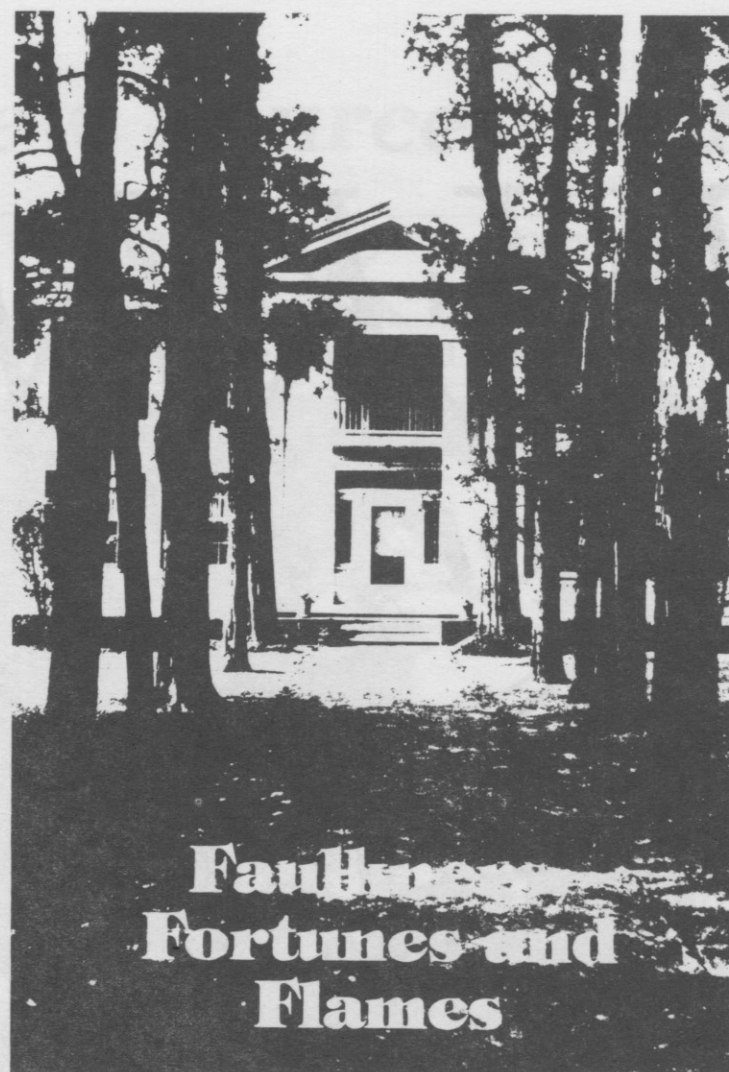
Kerr, Elizabeth M. *William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha: "A Kind of Keystone in the Universe."* Examines, in three main sections, "Themes and Thematic Symbols," "The Mythology of Yoknapatawpha" and "The Quest for Freedom." New York: Fordham University Press. 438 pp. \$40.

McDowell, Edwin. "14 Love Poems by Faulkner to be Published." *The New York Times*, March 27, 1984, pp. 1, 22. Reports on publication of Faulkner's *Vision in Spring*, by University of Texas Press.

Notes on Mississippi Writers, Hilton Anderson, ed. Vol. XVI, Nos. 1 & 2 (1984). Includes "The Japanese Reception of William Faulkner," by Kiyoyuki Ono, and "The Reception and Reputation of William Faulkner in Norway, 1932-1982," by Hans H. Skei. (The two other essays in this special double issue are "Walker Percy in Canada: A Case for the Saskatchewan Sleeping Bag," by Duane J. MacMillan, and "The Plays of Tennessee Williams in Greece, 1946-1983," by Catherine Georgoudaki.)

(Welty, Eudora.) *Conversations with Eudora Welty*. Edited, with an Introduction, by Peggy Whitman Prenshaw. This collection of 26 interviews spans 40 years of Miss Welty's literary career, and includes more than 40 references to Faulkner. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi. Published April 13, 1984. 347 pp. + xii and Index. \$17.95 cloth, \$9.95 paper.

Yardley, Jonathan. "Poems and Pedants: The Faulkner Factory Keeps on Huffing." *The Washington Post*, April 2, 1984, pp. B1, B11. Reports on publication of *Vision in Spring*, and *The New York Times* having "inexplicably" made page one news of it. "By now Faulkner Inc. should be a candidate for the Fortune 500," Yardley writes. Judith L. Sensibar's presentation of the 14 poems "is, in fact, an intelligent and thoughtful analysis—though it probably gives the poems far greater weight than they deserve....The general reader who hopes that one last gift from the master awaits him will only be disappointed; "Vision in Spring" is apprentice work, and ephemera, and very bad poetry."

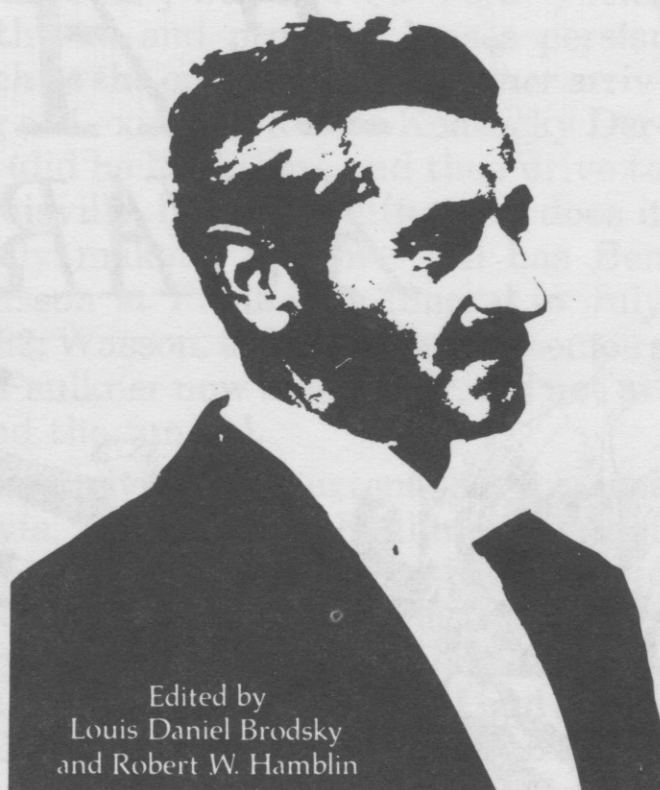


On Fa(u)lkners, Other Oxonians

THIS HANDSOME PICTORIAL record of 36 Oxford and vicinity homes and churches has been authored and published by Jack Case Wilson of Nashville. Included among the historic homes in *Faulkners, Fortunes and Flames* are Rowan Oak, the J.W.T. Falkner House, the Trigg-Doyle-Falkner House, and Dolly and John Faulkner's Memory House. Other homes featured are those of Thompson-Elliott, Avant-Stone (and Phil Stone's law offices), Elma Meek, W. S. Neilson, Longstreet-Carter-Cobb, Lamar Place, Skipwith House, Thompson-Chandler, Isom Place, Cedar Hill Farm, Howry-Hill, Shipp House, Cedar Oaks, and Ammadelle. Churches pictured, with histories, are College Hill Presbyterian, First Presbyterian, Cumberland Presbyterian, and St. Peter's Episcopal. Wilson includes sketches on "Grant's occupation of Oxford, December 1862," "The Real Battle of 'Harrykin Creek,'" and "The Burning of Oxford, August 1864." A total of 135 photographs made or gathered by Wilson, including some from attics near and far, illustrate the 127-page history, published by Annandale Press of Nashville in an edition of 1,000 copies. The book may be ordered from Annandale Press, Box 50911, Nashville, TN 37215, at \$19.95 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling. Wilson,

FAULKNER

Volume II: The Letters



SECOND VOLUME in the Brodsky Collection series presents almost 500 letters and other documents by Faulkner, family members, associates and friends, with illustrations. It is available from University Press of Mississippi, 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson 39211, at \$35.

originally from Greenville, Miss., was a Carrier Scholar at the University of Mississippi during studies in classical archaeology. While at Ole Miss, he was active with the Oxford Pilgrimage of historic homes and churches. With help and encouragement of Mary Alice Tate, one of the founders of the Pilgrimage, and the Terry family who owned the Thompson-Chandler House (Hamilton Hill), he began researching the histories of Oxford's old homes. The search encompassed original deeds, probate records, newspapers, and obituary and genealogical records, and took Wilson to New Jersey, Iowa, Tennessee and elsewhere around the country for family photographs and documents, "many from people whose families left Oxford almost one hundred years ago." He drew also from state historical societies for diaries and letters written by Union soldiers during the Civil War, and from Northern newspapers for accounts of life in occupied Oxford. Wilson is a member of the Class of 1985 at the Vanderbilt School of Law.

Etchings . . .

(From Page 3)

Rives BFK; as in all four etchings, it is in black ink. Fewer than 45 were printed, all signed "Artist's Proof" (none numbered). Passages from five Faulkner novels in backwards hand writing form a decorative border.

"Spotted Horses" (1982) was printed by hand on Rives BFK in an edition of 100, 80 of which are signed and numbered; the remaining 20 are signed "Artist's Proof" and are hand colored. The first of the panels depicts ponies being led into Frenchman's Bend, harnessed with barbed wire; the second shows Henry Armstid hitting his wife with a rope in the corral; next is V.K. Ratliff standing in his underwear in his room at Mrs. Littlejohn's boarding house, one sock on, as Henry Armstid's horse enters the room; the fourth scene is of Mrs. Littlejohn breaking her washboard over the horse's face at the back stoop; lastly, the horse jumps over Wallstreet Panic Snopes in the hallway.

The third of the four Bolt/PEN/Faulkner etchings is titled "2 May 1983" (the date of the award ceremony). Printed, also on Rives BFK on an intaglio press and a facsimile of an 18th Century letterpress, it pictures Boon Hogganbeck and the tree full of squirrels, from the closing paragraph of "The Bear." This etching was done in 100 signed and numbered copies, with two artist's proofs.

Proof states and plates for the etchings are in the collection of the Manuscripts Department, Alderman Library, University of Virginia.

Prices and particulars on availability of the posters may be obtained from Thomas Bolt at 133 Stribling Ave., Charlottesville, VA 22903, telephone 804-979-5431, or from Dr. Katherine Zdravec, Folger Shakespeare Library, 201 East Capitol Street, Washington, DC 20003, telephone 202-544-7077. The PEN/Faulkner Award benefits from each etching sold.

Another product of Thomas Bolt and his press is his first book, *Land*, poems and etchings, published in 100 signed and numbered copies. It is available from Richard C. Ramer, Old and Rare Books, 225 East 70th Street, New York 10021, at \$225. Bolt is presently collaborating on a new book of poems and woodcuts, under the working title of *Red Leaves*, with landscape painter Richard Crozier.

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